

1. Factor which selectively interacts with a PrPSc but not with PrPc.
2. Factor according to claim 1 which is selected from plasminogen, fragments of plasminogen and derivatives thereof.
3. Factor according to any of claims 1 or 2, characterized in that it interacts with the carboxy terminus of PrPSc.
4. Factor according to any of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that it is capable of interacting with PrPSc of different species.
5. Composition comprising a PrPSc and a factor according to any of claims 1 to 4.
6. Composition according to claim 5, wherein PrPSc is bound to the factor.
7. Composition according to claim 6, wherein PrPSc is noncovalently bound to the factor.
8. A carrier comprising a factor according to any of claims 1 to 4 and/or a composition according to any of claims 5 to 7.
9. Carrier according to claim 8 which is selected from magnetic beads, filter stripes, microtiter plates, non-magnetic

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beads, plasmon surface resonance plates, microarray plates, liquid carriers undergoing phase transition to solid, and combination thereof.

10. Ligand which specifically interacts with a composition according to any of claims 5 to 7.
11. Diagnostic kits containing a factor according to any of claims 1 to 4 and/or a composition according to any of claims 5 to 7 and/or a carrier according to any of claims 8 and 9 and/or a ligand according to claim 10, optionally together with further components such as buffers, reagents for the a detection and working instructions.
12. Pharmaceutical composition comprising a factor according to any of claims 1 to 4 and/or a ligand according to claim 10.
13. A process for detecting a PrPSc in a sample, characterized in that the sample is contacted with a factor according to any of claims 1 to 4 and/or a carrier according to claims 8 or 9 and/or a ligand according to claim 10.
14. A process for removing PrPSc from biological material, comprising the step of contacting the material with a factor according to any of claims 1 to 4 and/or a carrier according to any of claims 8 or 9 and/or a ligand according to claim 10.

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15. Method for diagnosing human transmissible spongiform encephalopathies and prion encephalopathies of animals, characterized in that the material of the organism to be tested is brought into contact with a factor according to any of claims 1 to 4 and/or a carrier according to any of claims 8 to 9 and/or a ligand according to claim 10.
16. Use of a factor according to any of claims 1 to 4 and/or a composition according to any of claims 5 to 7 and/or a carrier according to any of claims 8 or 9 and/or a ligand according to claim 10 for the diagnosis of human transmissible spongiform encephalopathies or prion encephalopathies of animals.
17. Use of a factor according to any of claims 1 to 4 and/or a composition according to any of claims 5 to 7 and/or a carrier according to any of claims 8 or 9 and/or a ligand according to claim 10 for removing PrPSc from and/or inactivating PrPc in a biological material.

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